DISPENSATIONS

Dr. Lester Sumrall

INNOCENCE

CONSCIENCE

HUMAN GOVERNMENT

PROMISE

LAW

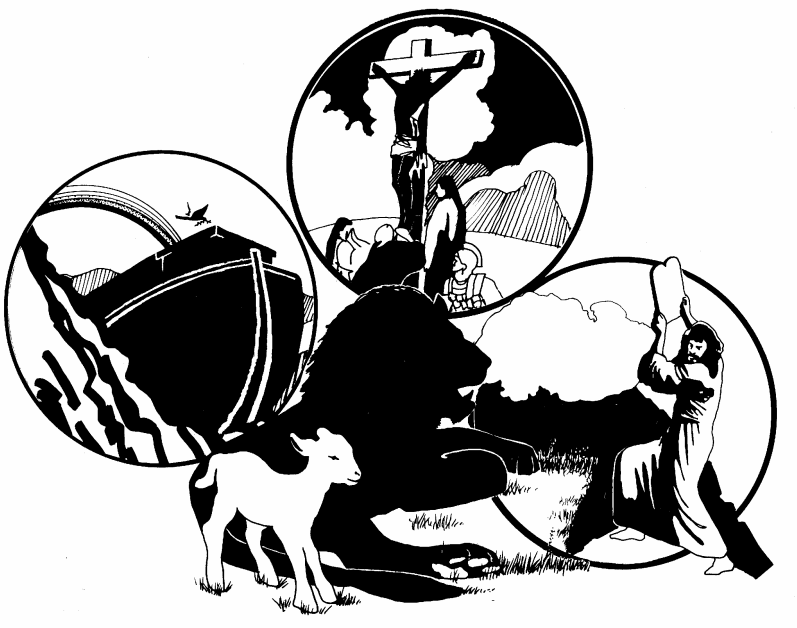
GRACE

MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS



by

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PLEASE NOTE:
This study guide is designed to be a companion to the audio/video teaching tape, *Dispensations*, by Dr. Lester Sumrall.

It is a college workbook with space allowed for your personal notes.

All scriptures, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the *King James Version of the Holy Bible.*

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DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 1

GOD'S PLAN FOR MAN

INTRODUCTION:

A dispensation is a Biblical division of time. During these time periods, God relates to mankind through specific laws and covenants. These dispensations form the skeleton of Biblical truth.

A person must understand the dispensations of God before the Bible can be clearly interpreted.

READING:

Genesis 1:1, *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

1. THE ORIGIN OF GOD'S PLAN

   A. The Lord said more in the first verse of the Bible than is written in entire libraries of books.

   B. People have sought to discover the origins of the universe throughout history.

      1) Some people teach that the universe began with a big bang.
      2) Others teach that life began with a slimy mess found in the mud.

      It is much simpler to accept the Word of God.

2. UNDERSTANDING GOD'S PLAN FOR MANKIND

   A. The person who lives the best life understands that God is the source of everything.

      The societies built by these people are the great societies of history.

   B. These societies are not like India's which is burdened with millions of gods. India is unable to grow because of superstition and tradition.

C. God created the earth from nothingness. He made it into a fertile world capable of sustaining life.

D. The Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters.

1) The name of God in Genesis 1:1 is *Elohim*. This name is plural and speaks of the duality of God. It implies that God is more than a single entity.
2) The implication is that the entire Trinity was involved in creation.

E. All of heaven moved to create God's divine plan for man.

4. THE POWER OF WORDS

Genesis 1:3, *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

A. People are just beginning to realize the potential force and power of the spoken word.

B. Two thousand years ago, a Roman centurion understood the power of the spoken word.

Matthew 8:8-9, *The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.*
v. 9, *For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*

C. I understand the power of words. I can speak the word, and demons will come out of people. I can speak another word and people are healed. These words carry the authority Jesus Christ gave to His disciples.

Mark 16:17-18, *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*
v. 18, They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

D. You are the result of your own confession. If you confess love, tenderness and mercy, then you will become that kind of person.

Romans 10:4-10, *Romans 10:4, For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*
v. 5, *For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.*

v. 6, *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)*
v. 7, *Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)*
v. 8, *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;*
v. 9, *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*
v. 10, *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

5. THE FALL OF THE ANOINTED CHERUB

A. Lucifer, or Satan, was the anointed cherub.

Ezekiel 28:14, *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*

B. He was called the son of the morning.

Isaiah 14:12, *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

C. He was created to be one of the three great archangels. God planned for him to rule one of three divisions of angels in heaven.

D. The "I wills" of Satan (Isaiah 14:13-14)

1) *…I will ascend into heaven…*
2) *…I will exalt my throne above the stars of God…*
3) *…I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation…*
4) *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds…*
5) *…I will be like the most High.*

E. The fall of this archangel is the first event in all of the known, divine dispensations.

6. HUMANITY IS NEUTRAL IN THE WARFARE.

A. Man is not a part of the conflict between the anointed cherub and God. He is neutral.

B. The devil hates God. He wants to hurt God anyway he can. Often the only way he can hurt God is to hurt people.

7. AN OUTLINE OF THE DISPENSATIONS

A. The Dispensation of Innocence occurred before Adam fell. (Genesis 1-3)

B. During the Dispensation of Conscience, God spoke to mankind through his inner being. (Genesis 4-6)

C. The Dispensation of Human Government occurred when government moved from an individual and familial basis to a pattern of group decisions. (Genesis 7-11)

D. The Dispensation of Promise happened when God gave mankind a renewed promise of a Savior. This Savior would defeat the devil, man’s enemy. (Genesis 12-Exodus 19)

E. The Dispensation of the Law began when God gave Moses His commandments. (Exodus 20-John 19:30)

F. The Dispensation of Grace is this current dispensation. It is the dispensation where mankind can find salvation through Jesus Christ. (John 19-Revelation 19)

G. The Millennium will be the dispensation where Christ will reign on this earth for 1,000 years. (Revelation 20)

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DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 2

THE TIME OF HUMANITY'S INNOCENCE

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible can only be understood through an individual's comprehension of the dispensations of time. The key to the Bible is the divine dispensations.

READING:

Genesis 1:26, *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

1. THE WEEK OF CREATION

   A. On the first day, God created light and separated it from the darkness.

   B. The second day, He created the firmament in the heavens. This firmament differentiates between the sky and the land.

   C. On the third day, the Lord created dry land and vegetation. He formed the tall mountains and low valleys.

   D. On the fourth day, God created the sun, moon and stars.

   E. Birds and water creatures were created on the fifth day.

   F. The sixth day saw the creation of the land animals and man.

      1) Man was the last of God's creations.
      2) God built the house before He put anyone in it.

   G. On the seventh day, God rested.

2. A DAY IS LIKE A THOUSAND YEARS.

II Peter 3:8, *But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

A. The first two days, or dispensations, lead us to the time of the flood. These two days are the first 2,000 years of mankind's history.

B. Days four and five, the second 2,000 years, lead to the cross.

C. The next 2,000 years close with this current Dispensation of Grace.

D. The seventh day is the Millennial reign of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the day of rest, and will last 1,000 years.

3. WHY INNOCENCE?

A. God named this first dispensation "innocence" because man had yet to transgress. Mankind had never fought or rebelled against God.

B. A little baby is considered innocent because he has never lied, disobeyed his parents, or committed any other sin. That child lives in a state of innocence.

4. THE DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE HAS NO TIME ELEMENT.

A. The Dispensation of Conscience lasted 1,656 years.

B. The Dispensation of Human Government was 427 years long.

C. The Dispensation of Promise lasted 430 years.

D. The Dispensation of the Law was 1,718 years long.

E. The Dispensation of Innocence has no set time element. We do not know how long Adam and Eve lived in this blissful creation of God.

5. WHY DID GOD CREATE MANKIND?

God is love, and He has power. The very essence of God is love.

I Corinthians 2:9, *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

A. Love's basic nature is fulfilled in creation.

B. Love is a creator. God is love, and love creates.

C. God's love caused Him to create the mountains. They were beautiful in strength, but they could not kiss Him good-night.

D. God made the sun and stars, but they could not embrace Him with love.

E. God made the mighty waters which flow throughout the earth, but they could not love Him.

F. Love always desires love.

1) The Lord wanted someone who could reciprocate His love.
2) God is love, and He needs love.
3) God created Adam and Eve so He could love them, and they could love Him in return.

6. WHAT IS SATAN DOING TODAY?

A. He divides homes through strife and divorce.

B. He divides hearts.

C. He separates friends.

D. He tries to abort anything God is doing.

E. He tries to destroy Edenic joy, peace and happiness.

F. He tries to break up fellowship between people and God.

7. THE BEGINNING OF MANKIND

A. Adam was given responsibility.

Genesis 2:16-17, *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:*
v. 17, *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

B. Man was undefiled in his original Edenic state.

C. God desires pure, undefiled love from everyone.

D. Adam volitionally, willfully and intentionally ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

1) The devil did not force him to do it.

   James 4:7, *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

2) The devil is not your master.
3) You have only one master, the Lord Jesus Christ.
4) Adam's failure was the deliberate violation of God's law. He ate the fruit of God's tree.

8. WHAT IS YOUR SPIRIT?

A. Your spirit is your power to communicate with God.

B. Your spirit contains your power of divine revelation.

C. Your spirit holds your power of intuition.

D. Your spirit is your born-again nature.

E. Your five senses will obey your spirit. It will help keep you from sins like gluttony and theft, if you will allow it.

F. Your spirit rules in righteousness. God rules in love.

9. JUDGMENT IN THE DISPENSATION OF INNOCENCE

Genesis 3:24, *So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

A. Adam and Eve were exiled from the Garden of Eden.

B. Their spirits died within them when they ate the fruit.

C. Curses were placed on the serpent, earth, man and woman.

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DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 3

THE TIME OF CONSCIENCE

INTRODUCTION:

In these lessons about the divine dispensations, we learn how God has dealt with mankind since his creation. We can see the function and activities of these dispensations in the eternal program and plan of God.

READING:

Genesis 6:1-4, *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,*
v. 2, *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*
v. 3, *And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*
v. 4, *There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.*

1. THE LENGTH OF THE DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE

   The Dispensation of Conscience is one of the longer dispensations. It has been calculated to have lasted 1,656 years.

2. MANKIND'S RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

   A. Man's responsibility to God centers around his need to return to God.

   B. A Savior was promised to help humanity return to God.

   C. During this dispensation, there was no division between human beings on earth.

      1) Everyone lived and worked together.
      2) Cain married his sister. There could have been several hundred people on the earth by that time.

3. THREE PRIESTHOODS

Three priesthoods have been established by God in man's history.

A. The Melchizedek priesthood

1) Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek.
2) Melchizedek was the king and priest of Salem.

B. The Aaronic priesthood

C. The Christian priesthood, which is fashioned after the Melchizedek priesthood

4. THE MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD

A. Melchizedek was without a recorded beginning or end of life.

B. He was a created being. He had no mother or father.

C. He was a man.

D. Genesis 6:1-4 says that the sons of God married the daughters of Adam. This combination caused giants to be born.

1) If Seth's seed had married Cain's seed, giants would not have been produced. Weakness never produces strength, it is biologically impossible.
2) The sons of God were tempted by Satan to marry women.

a) The devil hoped that these couplings would destroy the possibility of a coming Savior.
b) If the bloodline of women was polluted by the sons of God, there would be no pure women. Without pure women, a Savior could not be produced.

5. THE PURPOSE OF THE FLOOD

A. The flood's purpose was to isolate womanhood from pollution. This isolation permitted the birth of the Savior.

B. The flood was not caused because these people were anymore sinful than people today. Today's people may be more sinful than they were at the time of the flood. Today's people may be even more sinful than the people who lived in Sodom and Gomorrah.

The flood was not caused by the amount or magnitude of the people's sin. It was caused by the type of sin committed.

6. GREAT PEOPLE OF THE TIME OF CONSCIENCE

A. Enoch

1) Enoch had a perfect walk with God for over 100 years. The Lord enjoyed walking with Enoch so much that one day He just took him home. Enoch never died.
2) He fathered a son named Methuselah.

B. Methuselah

1) He was the great-great-great-grandson of Adam.

2) The name, Methuselah, means "at his death, judgment comes."

3) Methuselah lived longer than any other person, 969 years.

4) The same year Methuselah died, the flood came.

5) He lived longer than anyone else because of the mercy of God. The mercies of God are found from Genesis to Revelation. The mercies of God are the most magnificent things in the Bible.

7. GOD DOES NOT WANT TO JUDGE MAN.

A. God had to judge man because of his wickedness.

B. Giants and monsters were born because of this very strange relationship between the sons of God and the daughters of Adam. These sons of God were an angelic priesthood created by God on earth.

C. The sons of God were the ones who really caused the flood.

D. These sons of God were not human. They are confined in hell or Tartarus. It is a prison.

II Peter 2:4-10, *For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;*
v. 5, *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;*
v. 6, *And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;*
v. 7, *And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:*
v. 8, *(For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)*

v. 9, *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:*
v. 10, *But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*

1) These angels were fallen created beings. They did not have wings.
2) These creatures had an opportunity for salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. THE DISPENSATION OF CONSCIENCE IS OVER.

God never moves in reverse. There will never again be a period of Innocence or Conscience because God has moved forward and advanced.

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DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 4

THE TIME OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

INTRODUCTION:

The Dispensation of Human Government was a short one. It only lasted 427 years before its collapse.

READING:

Genesis 11:1-6, *And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.*
v. 2, *And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*
v. 3, *And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.*
v. 4, *And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*
v. 5, *And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.*
v. 6, *And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.*

1. THE BEGINNING OF THE DISPENSATION OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT

   A. Noah left the ark, and God met him supernaturally.

   B. God created the first rainbow as a promise to never destroy the earth with a flood again.

   C. Human government started with God helping man, blessing man, inspiring and encouraging him as he emerged from the ark.

2. THE DEVIL STIRRED UP TROUBLE IMMEDIATELY.

Satan caused Noah to get drunk. This incident created problems in his family that may have never ceased.

3. TWO IMPORTANT EVENTS DURING THIS TIME

A. During the days of Peleg, God divided the land mass of the earth.

Genesis 10:25, *And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided...*

1) The world's land mass was once one large continent. If you cut apart a map of the world, then fit the continents together; they would fit like a ball. Africa fits snugly into South America and the West Indies. The eastern coast of Asia fits with the western coasts of North America.
2) The earth was divided by the power of God.

B. Different languages were born at Babel. It is possible that the different races were created at the same time.

Genesis 11:9, *Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.*

4. MANKIND WITHOUT GOD

Ever since his fall, man has tried to live without God.

A. When Noah and his family emerged from the ark, they began to multiply throughout the world.

B. At this time humanity was united. Everyone lived in the same area and spoke the same language.

C. These people began to build a city and a tower. The bottom of this tower was built on a plain, and may have been 100 miles square. It probably took thousands of men to build.

Genesis 11:7-9, *Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*
v. 8, *So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.*
v. 9, *Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.*

5. AT ONE TIME THE WHOLE WORLD WAS UNITED.

A. It became disjointed by the power of God.

B. If you were to take a map of the earth and cut it apart, it would fit together like a ball. Africa fits snugly right into South America and the West Indian area. Asia fits right into the western part of our nation.

6. THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

The language barrier is the most divisive thing in the world.

A. Sin is the reason we have over 2,000 different languages today.

Genesis 11:7, *Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.*

B. The reason for continents, races and nations is so God could separate mankind and bring a Savior to the earth. This Savior is the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. Only in the last few years has the separation between mankind been bridged. People have been able to come together, as they crossed the oceans with ships, then planes and finally with the worldwide mass media.

7. THE PROMISE

Genesis 3:15, *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

A. The Lord Jesus fulfilled the promise of Genesis 3:15. He came and bruised the head of the devil.

B. The devil could only bruise Jesus' heel. This occurred when the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary. When He was resurrected, He completely destroyed the devil's power.

Matthew 28:18, *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

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DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 5

THE TIME OF PROMISE

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this lesson is to understand how Jesus Christ functions throughout the Bible. These lessons also demonstrate how God has worked with Christ from the beginning to bring eternal redemption and salvation.

The Dispensation of Promise only lasted 430 years, but it was a very powerful dispensation.

READING:

Genesis 12:1-3, *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:*
v. 2, *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*
v. 3, *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

1. ABRAM WAS THE BEGINNING OF THIS DISPENSATION.

   Romans 4:3, 20-21, *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*

   v. 20, *He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*
   v. 21, *And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.*

   A. Spiritual warfare took place during this dispensation. Some terrible events occurred.

      1) Abram's wife, Sarai, was unable to bear a child.
      2) Sodom and Gomorrah existed and were destroyed during this time period. Their people were exceedingly wicked.

B. God made promises to His people.

1) God made a promise to Abram (Abraham).

Genesis 12:2-3, *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*
v. 3, *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

2) Isaac believed the promise.

Genesis 25:11, *And it came to pass after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac; and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi.*

3) Jacob received the promise.

Genesis 27:28-29, *Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:*
v. 29, *Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.*

4) God made a promise to Joseph, and all of Israel.

Genesis 50:24-25, *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.*
v. 25, *And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.*

2. JACOB'S SONS

Most of Jacob's sons refused to serve the Lord as they should have served Him.

A. The ten oldest sons hated their brother, Joseph.

1) They hated him because he was good.
2) They hated him for his spiritual dreams.
3) They hated him because God communicated with him.

B. Jacob's sons threw Joseph, their brother, into a pit. Later they sold him and he went to Egypt. This is how the time of promise became associated with Egypt.

C. Joseph's Egyptian master put him in jail because he was a good man.

D. God continued to bless Joseph, even in prison. That prison cell became the stepping stone to a position as Prime Minister of Egypt.

3. GOD PRESERVED THE PROMISE THROUGH JOSEPH.

A. Joseph was the vehicle God used to preserve the Seed. His obedience to God enabled Him to bring forth a Messiah and Savior to humanity.

B. After Joseph became the Prime Minister of Egypt, he sent for his father and brothers.

1) They lived in Egypt for 400 years.
2) They became slaves in Egypt.
3) God could not create a Savior from slavery. He promised to return them to the land promised to Abraham.

4. MOSES

A. God chose Moses, as he stood by the burning bush, to set His people free.

Exodus 3:6-8, *Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*
v. 7, *And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;*
v. 8, *And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

B. When the time came for their deliverance from Egypt, God had to send ten plagues upon the nation before they would release the children of Israel.

Those ten plagues were:

1) Water turned to blood. (Exodus 7:14-25)
2) Frogs overran the land. (Exodus 8:1-15)
3) People and animals were infested with lice. (Exodus 8:16-19)
4) Swarms of flies (Exodus 8:20-32)
5) The death of the livestock (cattle, horses, donkeys, camels, oxen and sheep) (Exodus 9:1-7)
6) Boils that infected both people and animals (Exodus 9:8-12)
7) Destructive hail (Exodus 9:13-35)
8) Swarms of locusts (Exodus 10:1-20)
9) Three days of darkness (Exodus 10:21-29)
10) Death of the first-born, both people and animals (Exodus 11:1-12:30)

5. GOD WAS PREPARING TO CHANGE DISPENSATIONS.

A. God led the people of Israel to Mount Sinai. He began to move them into a new situation and a new dispensation.

B. The Dispensation of Promise was a time of trust in God. He alone promised.

C. God made covenants with people during the Dispensation of Promise.

Hebrews 11:13, *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

D. Life in God's covenant is a great way to live!

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 6

THE TIME OF THE LAW

INTRODUCTION:

The Ten Commandments introduce the Dispensation of the Law.

READING:

Exodus 20:1-17, *And God spake all these words, saying,*
v. 2, *I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*
v. 3, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
v. 4, *Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:*
v. 5, *Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;*
v. 6, *And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*
v. 7, *Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*
v. 8, *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*
v. 9, *Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:*
v. 10, *But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:*
v. 11, *For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*
v. 12, *Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*
v. 13, *Thou shalt not kill.*
v. 14, *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*
v. 15, *Thou shalt not steal.*

v. 16, *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*
v. 17, *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

1. THE DISPENSATION OF THE LAW

A. God began a new dispensation after the children of Israel emerged from Egypt.

B. The law involves far more than just the Ten Commandments.

C. The Dispensation of the Law is one of the longer dispensations. It lasted 1,718 years.

2. DANIEL AND THE GREAT IMAGE

A. Daniel, with supernatural power, saw the entire scope of world empires as revealed symbolically by the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The world empires revealed were those prophetically involved with Jesus Christ.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had a vision of an image of a man with a head of gold. The statue's chest, shoulders and arms were silver. Its thighs were bronze, and its legs iron. This vision was not man's conception of the empires, but God's.

In Daniel, chapter two, God revealed to Daniel how this metallic colossus foretold the future of mankind.

Daniel 2:19, *Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.*

This vision revealed four great, prophetic world empires. These empires cover the entire period of Gentile supremacy.

1) A single unit, the head of gold, represented Babylon.

   Daniel 2:38, . . .*Thou art this head of gold.*

2) The duality of the image's arms represented the Medo-Persian Empire. It was symbolized by silver. This empire was inferior to Babylon (Daniel 2:39).
3) Greece was the quadruple empire. It began as a monarchy under Alexander the Great, but was divided among four army generals after his death. The Grecian Empire is represented by the bronze thighs of the image.
4) The legs of iron and ten toes of iron and clay represent the Roman Empire. It was the last great earthly empire.

B. These world empires were born during the tremendous Dispensation of the Law.

C. This dispensation contains much secular history.

1) Great empires were born.
2) The magnificent city of Babylon was built.
3) Ferocious fighters of Media and Persia came into power.
4) The phrase, *the laws of the Medes and Persians*, meant that the law was baked in clay and could not be reversed.
5) The secular wisdom of the Greeks became renown during this period.

3. ELIJAH'S TRANSLATION

II Kings, chapter two relates the story of how the Lord translated Elijah to heaven with a whirlwind.

A. Elijah went to heaven without dying first.

B. Only two people were ever translated by the Lord.

1) Enoch

Genesis 5:24, *And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*

2) Elijah

II Kings 2:11, *And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.*

4. THE TIME OF THE JUDGES

Judges ruled Israel over 400 years during the Dispensation of the Law.

5. ISRAEL'S KINGS

All the kings of Israel and Judah reigned during the Dispensation of the Law.

A. Saul

B. David

C. Solomon

D. After Solomon's reign, Israel became a divided monarchy.

1) Jeroboam ruled 10 of Israel's 12 tribes in the North. They continued to be called Israel, but their capital was no longer the city of Jerusalem.

2) The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were ruled by Rehoboam, the son of Solomon. They became the nation of Judah, with Jerusalem as its capital. The word, Jew, evolved from the word, Judah.

6. A PLACE TO WORSHIP THE LORD

A. The nomadic nation of Israel built a tabernacle for God in the wilderness.

B. After David conquered Jerusalem, the Lord permitted them to build Him a temple.

C. Both the tabernacle and the temple had three main areas.

1) The outer court
2) The inner court
3) The Holy of Holies

7. HEATHEN RELIGIONS

Most of the major heathen religions (except Islam) began during the Dispensation of the Law.

A. Buddhism

B. Confucianism

C. Hinduism

8. ISRAEL LIVED UNDER THE LAW

During this period of time the nation of Israel lived under God's law.

A. Moses wrote the law in scrolls so it could be read by later generations.

B. Israel was required to live by certain precepts established in the Ten Commandments.

1) You shall not put any gods before Me.
2) You shall not have any idols.
3) You shall not worship the things you can see.
4) You shall not worship anything made of earthly materials.

C. God also established how people should respond to each other.

1) You should love your neighbor.
2) You should be faithful to your spouse and family.
3) You should have personal goodness.
4) You should not grow angry and kill.
5) You should not steal another person's property.

9. GREAT PROPHETS

The great prophets of the Bible lived during the Dispensation of the Law.

A. Isaiah

B. Jeremiah

C. Elijah

D. Elisha

E. Ezekiel

10. THE LAW LASTED OVER 1700 YEARS.

This Dispensation of the Law lasted more than 1,700 years.

A. It began with Israel's exodus from the land of Egypt.

B. It ended with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

C. This dispensation represents the great patience of God. He patiently works with mankind to bless it.

1) He wishes to bring us salvation.
2) He desires to help us.
3) He desires to lift us up from the mire of sin and sorrow.
4) He wishes to bring us peace.
5) He wishes to bring us joy.

11. PEOPLE OF THE LAW

God used many different people in different ways during this dispensation.

A. The judges

1) Gideon
2) Samson, who became the strongest man on earth

B. The kings

1) Saul physically stood head and shoulders above the other men of Israel. He was a brave man who allowed pride to fill his heart. This pride cost him his kingdom and favor with God.
2) David was one of the most exciting men in the Old Testament.

a) He wrote most of the book of Psalms. He was the psalmist and melody-maker of God. He played instruments and wrote beautiful words for his songs of praise and worship.

b) David had a tremendous revelation of the Lord.
c) He was anointed to praise and magnify the Lord. He knew how to rejoice before the Lord.

3) Solomon was given special wisdom by God to rule the people.

C. The prophets.

1) Elijah

a) He was a common man with an uncommon love for God.
b) He was translated to heaven and did not see death.
c) He had a personal relationship with God.

2) Daniel
3) Isaiah
4) Jeremiah

12. THIS DISPENSATION ENDED WITH CHRIST'S DEATH.

This dispensation, like previous ones, ended in failure.

A. The failure of the Law.

1) It did not bring people to God. It could not even bring one nation to God.
2) It did not help people to worship the Lord properly.
3) It could not cause people to live a good life.
4) It could not bring people into a relationship of peace with God.

B. At the end of this dispensation the Lord decided it was time to do something. The Lord Jesus Christ came to earth to live, die and be resurrected so He could save the world from sin.

13. GREAT EVENTS DURING THE TIME OF THE LAW

A. During their time of wandering in the wilderness, the people of Israel repeatedly sinned and rebelled against God. After one of these rebellions, God allowed poisonous serpents to enter the camp and bite the children of Israel.

1) Moses put a bronze image of a serpent on a tall pole. He planted this pole in the middle of the camp. When the people were bitten, they could look at the bronze serpent and they would be healed.

Numbers 21:9, *And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.*

2) This bronze serpent foretold the defeat of the serpent. From the cross, the Lord Jesus Christ healed the world of plague, sorrow, and tribulation. He healed all the personal problems of the world.

B. God needed a woman to bring the Savior to the world. He found the Virgin Mary.

1) The Holy Spirit overshadowed her and she conceived a child.
2) Through the seed of the woman, a Savior came to redeem mankind from their sin. He led the people back to God.

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 7

THE TIME OF GRACE

INTRODUCTION:

God started a new dispensation. The Dispensation of God's Grace became a time when people were no longer in bondage to the law.

What God wanted from people could not be written on tablets of stone, but upon men's hearts. This Dispensation of Grace began with the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.

READING:

Ephesians 2:8, *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God* (NKJV).

1. GRACE

   The word, grace, is translated from the Greek word, *charis. Charis* is used 166 times in the Bible.

   A. It means "unmerited favor."

   B. It is a grant of spiritual life.

   C. It is a demonstration of divine love.

2. GOD'S THRONE OF GRACE

   Hebrews 4:16, *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need* (NKJV).

   II Corinthians 12:9, *And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness. . ."* (NKJV).

3. THIS DISPENSATION BIRTHED THE CHURCH.

Acts 2:1-4, 41, *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*
v. 2, *And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*
v. 3, *Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.*
v. 4, *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

v. 41, *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them* (NKJV).

A. Three thousand new people were added to the church on Pentecost. The stamp of God's approval was placed on the church, and it was born.

B. Many things began to happen after the church was born.
I Corinthians 15:20 tells us that the firstfruits arose with Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:20, *But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep* (NKJV).

Matthew 27:51-53, *Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,*
v. 52, *and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;*
v. 53, *and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many* (NKJV).

C. Before Christ's crucifixion, the dead righteous people went to a place called Paradise. After His resurrection, this place no longer existed.

4. GRACE IN THE BOOK OF JOEL

Joel 2:28-29, *"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.*
v. 29, *And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days"* (NKJV).

A. Joel's prophecy was partially fulfilled at Pentecost.

Acts 2:17-21, *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.*

v. 18, *And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*
v. 19, *I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.*
v. 20, *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.*
v. 21, *And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved"* (NKJV).

B. Two thousand years after Pentecost, we see the beginning of the completion of Joel's prophecy. This beginning is part of the latter rain.

James 5:7, *Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain* (NKJV).

C. We are living nearly 2,000 years since Christ gave Himself on Calvary, ascended to heaven and was seated at the right hand of the Father. He will remain there until the time of redemption is completed.

D. This period of grace has lasted almost 2,000 years. This Dispensation of Grace is also the time of the church.

1) The church contains neither Jew nor Gentile.
2) The church contains neither slaves nor freemen.
3) The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ contains only the redeemed of God. It does not matter who you are. You can be saved if you confess the lordship of Jesus Christ with your mouth, and believe it in your heart.

5. THE GREAT COMMISSION

The Dispensation of Grace is dominated by the Great Commission.

Mark 16:15-16, . . . *preach the gospel to every creature.*
v. 16, *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.*

A. These instructions are the commission which belongs to this period of grace.

B. The preaching of the Gospel is the most important job on earth.

1) Salvation comes when you hear the Gospel and accept the Lord.
2) Damnation comes when you hear the Gospel and reject it.

C. Only two kinds of people exist on earth; the saved and the unsaved.

6. THE TERMINATION OF THIS DISPENSATION

A. The Dispensation of Grace will terminate with the Great Tribulation. This dispensation will end in disaster.

B. Christ can return at anytime. I believe that there is nothing left in prophecy to be fulfilled before His return.

C. The next great event of this dispensation will be the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to take His people to heaven with Him.

I Thessalonians 4:17, *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord* (NKJV).

D. After Christ takes His church away, the world will enter the Dispensation of the Great Tribulation. The Great Tribulation is different from Christian persecution.

During the Great Tribulation, Jesus Christ will battle the Antichrist.

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 8

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

INTRODUCTION:

There are times of persecution for the Church. These times are not necessarily a part of the Great Tribulation. They are a part of the normal tribulation which has been happening since the time of the apostles. This hatred for the church has lasted nearly 2,000 years, and continues to the present day. People who live godly lives in Jesus Christ will be persecuted. They suffer for His name's sake.

The Great Tribulation has to do with the final judgment of God on the earth. It is not the tribulation the church has suffered over the last 2,000 years. Some of the events which will take place during the Great Tribulation are discussed in this lesson.

READING:

Matthew 24:1-9, *Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.*
v. 2, *And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."*
v. 3, *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*
v. 4, *And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.*
v. 5, *"For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.*
v. 6, *"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.*
v. 7, *"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.*
v. 8, *"All these are the beginning of sorrows.*
v. 9, *"Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake"* (NKJV).

1. THE GREAT TRIBULATION IS A SUB-DISPENSATION.

A. The Lord Jesus Christ could return to this world at any time.

1) The gospel has been preached throughout the world.
2) People have been saved.
3) The Body of Christ is prepared for His return.

B. There are tremendous spiritual movements occurring in the world.

1) There is a great outpouring of the Holy Spirit on millions of people thought the world.
2) The latter rain is being poured out on the earth. Catholics, Episcopalians and other mainline denominations are enjoying the blessing of the former rain which fell on the day of Pentecost.

C. The next great event to happen will be the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I Thessalonians 4:14-18, *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.*
v. 15, *For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.*
v. 16, *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*
v. 17, *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*
v. 18, *Therefore comfort one another with these words* (NKJV).

D. The Great Tribulation may begin with Christ taking His bride into heaven. It will terminate on earth with the return of Jesus Christ and His bride to earth to fight the Antichrist.

1) The Great Tribulation will last between three-and-a-half and seven years.
2) We could possibly be in the Great Tribulation now. There are millions of problems in the world today that have no solutions.

2. MANY THINGS WILL OCCUR DURING THE GREAT TRIBULATION.

A. A satanic trinity will exist. It will consist of:

1) Satan himself
2) The Beast or Antichrist
3) The False Prophet

B. This satanic trinity will work together during the Great Tribulation.

1) The devil will deceive the world morally.
2) The Antichrist will deceive the world politically. He may call himself the Secretary of the United Nations, or another such title. He will certainly not call himself the Beast or Antichrist.
3) The False Prophet will deceive the world religiously. He will command people to worship the Antichrist.

3. SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH WILL HAPPEN

A. The things described in Revelation chapters 1-3 will occur.

1) The Lord Jesus Christ will be manifested like in Revelation, chapter one. He will be seen as the great I AM.
2) The seven churches could symbolize seven time periods.

a) Ephesus
b) Smyrna
c) Pergamos
d) Thyatira
e) Sardis
f) Philadelphia
g) Laodicea

3) This passage of Scripture does not speak about the Body of Christ. It refers to the backslidden, denominational church.

B. Seven seals will be broken during the Great Tribulation period. These seals will release various trials on the earth, including four horses and their riders.

1) The first rider will be on a white horse. He will be the Antichrist.
2) The second horse will be the red horse of war.
3) The third horse will be the black horse of famine.
4) The last horse will be the pale horse of death.

C. God is warning us now about the things that will happen. People need to understand that we are living in the 70th week foretold in the book of Daniel.

D. Seven trumpets will be blown. They will introduce:

1) Hail, fire and blood
2) A burning mountain will be thrown into the sea.
3) A star, Wormwood, will fall to earth.
4) The sun will be darkened.
5) The plague of locusts

6) The army of 200 million horsemen
7) Lightning, thunder, a great earthquake, and hail

E. Seven bowls or vials will have their contents poured on the earth.

1) Loathsome boils upon humanity
2) The sea will be turned to blood.
3) The fresh water will be turned to blood.
4) The sun will scorch the earth with a great heat.
5) Painful darkness
6) The Euphrates River will dry up.
7) Babylon will fall.

4. THREE FROG SPIRITS

Three spirits which look like frogs will enter the devil, Beast and False Prophet. These spirits will dominate them during the Great Tribulation. The most intense period of the Great Tribulation will last only three-and-a-half years.

5. THE 144,000 WITNESSES

Revelation 7:3-8, *Saying, "Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."*
v. 4, *And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:*
v. 5, *of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;*
v. 6, *of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;*
v. 7, *of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;*
v. 8, *of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed* (NKJV).

A. These witnesses will go everywhere talking about God.

B. Even though the Antichrist will reign, they will preach the Gospel anyway.

6. TWO OTHER WITNESSES

Revelation 11:3-4, *"And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."*

v. 4, *These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth* (NKJV).

A. These two witnesses may possibly be Elijah and Enoch, two people who never died.

B. They will witness in Jerusalem. The Antichrist will consider them such a torment that he will kill them and let their bodies lie in the streets of Jerusalem for three days and nights. After these three days, they will rise from the dead and ascend into heaven while their enemies watch.

Revelation 11:7-12, *When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.*
v. 8, *And their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*
v. 9, *Then those from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.*
v. 10, *And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.*
v. 11, *Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.*
v. 12, *And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them* (NKJV).

C. Many terrible conditions and situations will exist during the Great Tribulation. This will be a time primarily of God's judgment. The Antichrist will challenge Jesus Christ to fight him face to face.

7. THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

Revelation 19:6-10, *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!*
v. 7, *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."*
v. 8, *And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*
v. 9, *Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."*

v. 10, *And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*

A. This time could also be the time the Lord Jesus Christ awards crowns to the faithful.

1) The victor's crown
2) The martyr's crown
3) The elder's crown
4) The incorruptible crown

B. After the marriage supper of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus will return to earth with His saints to fight the Battle of Armageddon.

8. THE FINAL BATTLE

A. This final battle will be fought between the Antichrist and his armies, and Jesus Christ and His saints. The Lord will descend from heaven on a white horse to fight this Battle of Armageddon.

B. After this great battle, the Beast and False Prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire.

C. The devil will be bound and imprisoned in a bottomless pit during the Millennial Kingdom.

Revelation 9:1, *Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit* (NKJV).

9. THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON WILL CLOSE THE TRIBULATION PERIOD.

A. When Christ returns, He will touch the Mount of Olives. It will split, and a plain will develop from the Mount of Olives to the Valley of Megiddo. Megiddo is where the Battle of Armageddon will be fought.

B. This will be the greatest war in history. Over 200 million people will fight in this battle. The fighting will be so fierce that blood will flow to the horses' bridles, approximately three feet deep.

C. There will be no restraints on sin during the Great Tribulation. It will be the most desperate, violent, and immoral time the world has ever known. People will act worse than animals.

D. The Great Tribulation will close with the Battle of Armageddon and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 9

THE MILLENNIUM: THE TIME OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM

INTRODUCTION:

After the Great Tribulation, the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ on this earth will occur. This new time period is called the Millennium or the Millennial Kingdom.

The word, millennium, originates from two Latin words: *mille* which means "thousand," and *annus*, which means "year." The Millennial Kingdom will last 1,000 years.

READING:

Revelation 20:1-6, *Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*
v. 2, *He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;*
v. 3, *and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.*
v. 4, *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*
v. 5, *But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*
v. 6, *Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years* (NKJV).

1. THIS DISPENSATION WAS PROPHESIED.

   A. Isaiah wrote about the Millennium.

Isaiah 11:1-10, *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*
v. 2, *The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.*
v. 3, *His delight is in the fear of the LORD, and He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, nor decide by the hearing of His ears;*
v. 4, *But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.*
v. 5, *Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, and faithfulness the belt of His waist.*
v. 6, *"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them.*
v. 7, *The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.*
v. 8, *The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.*
v. 9, *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*
v. 10, *"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, and His resting place shall be glorious"* (NKJV).

B. Daniel received a vision of the Kingdom.

Daniel 7:13-14, *"I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him.*
v. 14, *Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed"* (NKJV).

C. Jesus prayed for the coming kingdom.

Luke 11:1-2, *Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."*
v. 2, *So He said to them, "When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* (NKJV).

2. THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM OF JESUS CHRIST

A. Jesus Christ is a king. He will rule over this earth for 1,000 years. At that time the world will be at peace.

B. Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit during that time. He will be unable to cause trouble.

C. God will show humanity how the world should have been run from the beginning.

D. People will no longer be poor and needy; they will have plenty. The sin of greed and lust for wealth will vanish. Everyone will work in harmony with their friends and neighbors. Happiness will cover the earth.

Ephesians 5:5, *For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God* (NKJV).

3. A GLORIOUS CHURCH WILL GOVERN THE WORLD.

Sinners have not ruled this present world with justice. Jesus Christ and His saints will rule the world during the Millennial Kingdom.

4. SOME PEOPLE WILL MISS THE 1,000 YEARS OF PEACE.

The wicked dead will not be resurrected until after the Millennial Kingdom. They will be resurrected when the time comes for them to be judged by God.

5. HEAVEN REJOICES OVER THE KINGDOM.

Revelation 11:16-17, *And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God,*
v. 17, *saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was and who is to come, because You have taken Your great power and reigned"* (NKJV).

Revelation 12:10, *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down"* (NKJV).

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 10

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

INTRODUCTION:

Every sinner who has ever lived on Earth will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ and be judged. This event will occur at the Great White Throne Judgment. Every monarch who refused to serve Jesus Christ will bow before that throne.

There must be a judgment day so each individual who refused to serve God will know that he was judged righteously, properly, and correctly. This will not be a trial, but a time when the sentence, or judgment, is pronounced.

READING:

Revelation 20:11-15, *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.*
v. 12, *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*
v. 13, *The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*
v. 14, *Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*
v. 15, *And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire* (NKJV).

1. WHY IS IT CALLED THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT?

   A. It is called a great throne because it is the supreme court of history. The eternal destinies of people who did not serve God will be resolved there.

   B. I believe it is called a white throne because of the immaculate majesty of Jesus Christ. He will be dressed in garments of white and seated on a crystal white throne.

2. JESUS CHRIST WILL BE THE JUDGE.

A. The Son of Man will judge mankind.

John 5:22-27, *"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,*
v. 23, *"that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*
v. 24, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.*
v. 25, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.*
v. 26, *"For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,*
v. 27, *"and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man"* (NKJV).

B. Nowadays, the story of your life can be put on microfilm. Somebody can push a few buttons and read everything about your life. Your life has been computerized, without your knowledge.

God's computers are a billion times more efficient than any of man's computers. Every deed you ever committed, and every thought you ever had is in His computers.

C. Once a young man got into trouble and hired a very fine lawyer. This lawyer found a way to get him out of his trouble. The young man again got into trouble and again hired the same lawyer. This lawyer was very clever and managed to get the young man out of trouble again.

A few years later, this young man was in serious trouble. When he went to court, the judge on the bench was the same lawyer he had hired a few years earlier.

At his sentencing, he spoke to the man who was now his judge, "Your honor, do you remember me? You were my lawyer a few years ago, and got me out of trouble twice."

The judge looked at him, and said, "Sir, I was your lawyer then. Now I am your judge. There is a big difference."

1) Jesus is our Lawyer today. He pleads our case before God the Father.

2) At the Great White Throne Judgment, He will no longer be our Savior and Lawyer, but our Judge.

   a) At that time He will judge every deed you have ever committed, and every thought you have ever had.
   b) Everything is recorded in His great books.

3. THE BOOK OF LIFE

A. Everyone who receives salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ will have his or her name recorded in the Book of Life.

   1) Being a minister will not place your name in that book.
   2) Being a deacon or elder will not put your name there.
   3) Being a Sunday school teacher will not record your name in the Book of Life.

B. Anyone who has refused to come to Christ and ask Him to forgive their sins (and have them blotted out with His blood) will not be listed in that book. At the Great White Throne Judgment, you will be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ according to the deeds you have done in your earthly body.

   1) Nothing will be hidden.
   2) Every thought and deed will be revealed.
   3) There will be open judgment.
   4) There will be open condemnation.

C. Any intelligent person should realize that he has nothing to lose by getting right with Jesus. If he does not get right with Jesus, he will lose everything.

D. Once there was a man who was imprisoned in Texas. He knew he would be in jail for a long time. He was so depressed that he did not know what to do. His mother went to the governor and said, “Please, release my son. I am in poor health, and have no husband. I have no one else to take care of me.”

   The story says that the governor pardoned the prisoner and sent word that he should be released. The prisoner refused to believe that he had been freed. He cursed the governor and refused to look at the paper containing the pardon. He mocked the governor and remained in his cell. He said, “I am not free. That pardon is false. It is not true.”

   The prisoner remained in his cell and served his sentence.

   1) You are offered spiritual freedom today.
   2) The Lord Jesus Christ is ready and willing to save you. Receive His pardon for your sins today.

3) If you are pardoned for your sins, you will not have to appear at the Great White Throne Judgment. Nobody will be saved at that judgment. Salvation is not offered, only damnation.

4. EVERYONE WILL BE AT THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

The great and small, rich and poor, powerful and weak will appear before the Lord Jesus Christ to be judged.

A. Cain will stand there with the blood of Abel on his hands.

B. Nimrod, who tried to build a tower to heaven, will stand there.

C. Adolf Hitler will be there with the blood of the millions of Jews and Gentiles he slaughtered in Europe.

D. Napoleon, who walked through innocent blood, will be judged there.

E. All the sinners of the ages will appear before that throne.

F. Everyone who has sinned against God will be there.

5. AVOID THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

A. Jesus Christ, stern and severe, will be the Righteous Judge.

B. Jesus Christ will pronounce the eternal sentence, “Condemned forever.”

C. This judgment will have no appeal. There can be no new trial. The judgment of Jesus Christ is final.

D. Those who are condemned will be cast into the lake of fire with the devil, False Prophet, Antichrist, and every other sinner of the ages.

6. THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT AND THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Some people confuse the Great White Throne Judgment with the Judgment Seat of Christ. These are two separate and distinct events.

A. Unlike the Great White Throne Judgment, the Judgment Seat of Christ does not deal with human destiny.

B. The Judgment Seat of Christ is a seat of rewards for the people who love and serve the Lord Jesus.

1) One person may be allowed to rule over one city; another ten cities.
2) Crowns will be awarded to the faithful.
3) There will be no sinners at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

STUDY GUIDE

INDIANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

DISPENSATIONS

Lesson 11

THE TIME OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible says a new heaven will be created in the elements above the earth. Currently, the devil is the prince and the power of the air. When the new heaven is created, every trace of Satan will be gone. There will be a new firmament and a new earth. The first heaven and earth will pass away, and there will be no oceans.

READING:

Revelation 21:1, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea* (NKJV).

1. THE EARTH WILL HAVE ONE LAND MASS.

   A. The earth was originally created as a single land mass. God separated this land mass into continents to separate people because of their wickedness.

      Genesis 10:25, *To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan*.

   B. God will create a new earth with a single land mass again.

      Revelation 21:1, *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea* (NKJV).

2. THE NEW WORLD

   This new earth will be far different from our present world.

   Revelation 21:4, *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away"* (NKJV).

A. There will be no tears of sorrow or regret on the new earth.

B. Death will be no more. It is a separator, and will no longer be able to separate us from our loved ones.

I Corinthians 13:12, *For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known* (NKJV).

C. There will be no more sorrow.

When I was in China, I stayed with a family. The hostess served me tea in an old and valuable teacup. It was a beautiful cup, and she was very proud of it. While enjoying my tea, I dropped the cup. It broke into hundreds of pieces as it hit the floor. I wanted to die from embarrassment.

The charming lady just smiled and said, "It is all right. The repair man will come and fix the cup tomorrow." The next day, a Chinese man came to the house. He put all the pieces together, and smoothed and polished the cup. It looked like it had never been broken.

The new Jerusalem will not contain any broken teacups. There will be no more sorrow.

D. There will be no more disappointments. Our hopes, dreams and aspirations are often dashed in this world. In the new Jerusalem, you will not be deceived or disappointed.

E. There will be no more pain. Both emotional and physical pain will cease to exist.

3. EVERYTHING WILL BE NEW.

In the new earth, everything will be brand new. It will be a new Paradise.

A. There will be a new heaven and a new earth.

B. It will be populated with a new people.

C. There will be a new capital city, the new Jerusalem.

D. There will be a new temple.

E. The sun will be replaced, and a new light will fill the world.

4. WHO WILL POPULATE THE NEW EARTH?

Revelation 21:7, *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son"* (NKJV).

A. The children of God will inherit all things.

B. He will be our God, and we shall be His children. We will be sons of the King of kings!

5. LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING

A. The King will sit upon a throne. We will worship and serve Him. We will no longer attend church, because we will worship God everywhere.

B. Since there will be no church, there will be no preachers. All the preaching will be finished. Ministry in this fashion has to do with this world. In the New Jerusalem, it will be ended.

1) Everyone will worship God.
2) Everyone will sing His praises.
3) All of us will reach our full potential.

6. THE LAND OF NO PROBLEMS

Jesus Christ is the One who can resolve all problems. In the New Jerusalem, there will be no more problems. We will live in the presence of Jesus.

Now is the time to consider where you want to spend eternity.

I John 1:9, *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

To have eternal life and a place in the New Jerusalem, just ask Jesus to forgive your sins. He will do the rest. He will cleanse you. He will forgive you. Most importantly, He will enter your name into His Book of Life. You will life forever and ever with the Lord.

Revelation 20:12, 15, *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

v. 15, *And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire* (NKJV).

DISPENSATIONS

INNOCENCE
CONSCIENCE
HUMAN GOVERNMENT
PROMISE
LAW
GRACE
MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

Dr. Lester Sumrall

1913 ~ 1996

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